

**Link
Wentworth**
Providing homes, building futures.



**Welcome to
Link Wentworth**

Tenant Handbook

Formerly Link Housing
JUNE 2021

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Welcome to Link Wentworth

Andrew McAnulty
CEO



On behalf of the team at Link Wentworth, I warmly welcome you to your new home.

We believe everyone has a right to a safe and secure home. A place where you can grow, connect with the community, and build brighter futures that create positive change.

Link Wentworth has recently formed from the merger of two strong community housing providers, Link Wentworth and Wentworth Community Housing. If your tenancy is managed from our Chatswood Hub, the information in this Handbook reflects the policies of the former Link Wentworth. As the two organisations increasingly come together, we will bring the way we work together. We will keep you updated along the way.

This Handbook has been designed with input from our Tenant Advisory Groups (TAG) to give you all the general information to help you settle in. We hope that the handbook answers any questions you have about your tenancy with Link Wentworth and your home. You can also get more information on our website www.linkwentworth.org.au. There are links to take you to tenant information such as policies and fact sheets that are on the original Link Wentworth and Wentworth Community Housing websites.

If you still have questions or wish to discuss any aspect of your tenancy, you can contact your Housing Manager.

We are committed to providing you with a secure home and a high standard of service.

Enjoy your new home!



About us

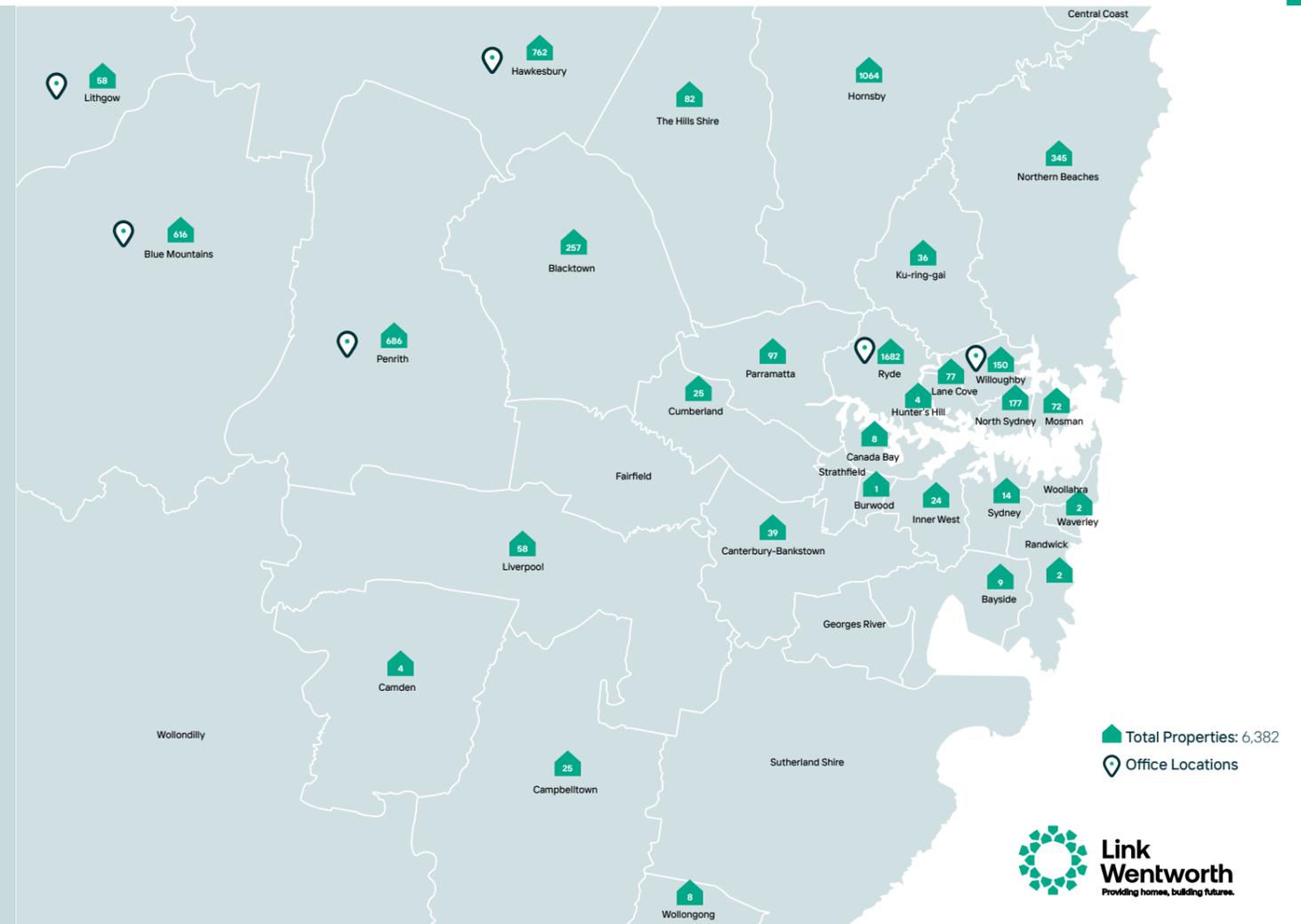
On 31st March 2021, Link Wentworth and Wentworth Community Housing officially merged, becoming Link Wentworth.

As a merged organisation, we are committed to creating and improving housing options and services that help people facing housing stress or homelessness. Using decades of community driven experience, our work engages the full spectrum of housing needs from homelessness services, to social, disability and affordable housing.

We believe everyone has a right to a safe and secure home where they can grow, connect with community, and build brighter futures that create positive change. The decision to merge was based on a mutual understanding

that together Link Wentworth and Wentworth Community Housing could achieve more by combining our operational scale and experience to help address the growing demand for affordable rental housing in New South Wales.

With nearly 6,400 homes across NSW, Link Wentworth is now one of the largest community housing providers in Australia and our mission is to not only create more community housing and better services, but to also advocate for inclusive and forward-thinking housing policy that will deliver a range of solutions to meet the current and future demand of all Australians.



Link Wentworth

Providing homes, Building futures.



Our commitment

Link Wentworth is a client-focused and service-orientated organisation committed to providing:

Quality service - locally delivered - by people who care

Our service commitment is for anyone who communicates with Link Wentworth. It has been developed through consultation with our TAG, tenants, staff, our board of directors, partners, applicants and other community members and stakeholders.

Welcome to Link Wentworth

Our Service Commitment

We will do the following:

- Get customer service right the first time
- Consult on and publish clear and measurable standards for all service areas
- Respond quickly:
 - Answer the phone as promptly as possible
 - Reply to letters and emails as soon as possible
 - Return voicemail messages
- Provide timely maintenance
- Be helpful and polite
- Give you opportunities to get involved
- Treat you fairly and let you know your rights
- Keep you fully informed
- Keep your personal details private
- Help you settle into your home and community
- Provide you with a home of which you can be proud

We are determined to keep this Commitment. If we are not able to achieve this, we will let you know why.

We are always interested to hear your ideas, thoughts about our service and feedback. Please see the details below about how you can share your feedback with us.



Our Policies

Link Wentworth has policies that cover many aspects of your tenancy.

You can view them online at: linkwentworth.org.au.

If you do not have access to a computer, you can have policies sent to you by calling **9412 5111**.

Your Tenancy

Your Lease with Link Wentworth

(Residential Tenancy Agreement)

Your lease is a contract which is required by the Residential Tenancy Act 2010. It sets out your rights, responsibilities, and information that can help you as a Link Wentworth tenant. Always keep a copy of your lease.

If you live in one of our Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) properties you will have an Accommodation Agreement with Link Wentworth instead of a lease.

Property Condition Report

When you sign your lease, you will also receive a Property Condition Report. This forms part of your lease.

You will need to:

- Check carefully that you agree with the completed condition report.
- Add an additional comment if you think something is missing.
- Sign and date the condition report in the spaces provided.
- Return one copy to our office within seven working days of the commencement date on the lease.

If you need any help in filling out the report, please contact our Client Services Team or your Housing Manager.

The condition report is also an important document and is used at the end of your tenancy. Keep it in a safe place with your lease.

The above does not apply to tenants transferring to Link Wentworth from public housing in December 2018.

Rental bonds

Some tenants must pay a rental bond. If you are renting an affordable housing or transitional housing property from Link Wentworth you will pay a bond.

A bond is a financial deposit paid by you, the tenant, to Link Wentworth. Link Wentworth sends your bond to Fair Trading NSW where it is held until the end of your tenancy. It may be used at that time to claim for tenancy-related charges.

The amount of bond required depends on your tenancy:

- Transitional housing tenants pay the same amount as two weeks subsidised rent.
- Affordable housing tenants pay the same as four weeks subsidised rent.

Market rent

For social housing tenants the market rent is listed in your lease.

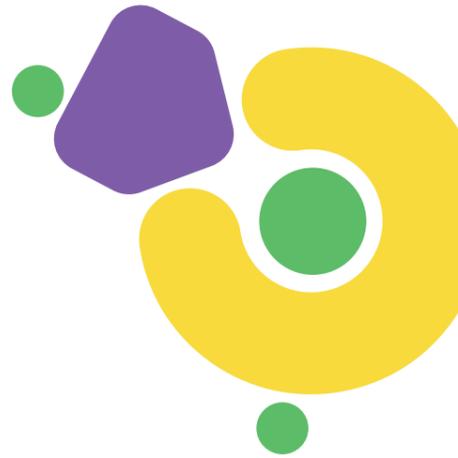
The market rent is the rent you would pay if you were renting your property on the private rental market or if you do not receive a rental subsidy.

Link Wentworth will give at least 60 days notice in writing if the market rent changes.

Rental subsidies

Link Wentworth tenants who are living in general and transitional housing programs can apply for a rental subsidy. Link Wentworth assesses the entire household's gross assessable income plus 100% of their Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) to work out the rental subsidy. You will be assessed for a rental subsidy twice a year.

If you are not eligible for a subsidy, you do not need to provide income details and the rent will change to the market rent for the property.



Your Tenancy

How we calculate your rental subsidy

The table below details the percentage of assessable income, payable by different members of the household:

Assessment rate	Tenant/Other Household Member
From 25%	The tenant, their spouse or live-in partner. This is regardless of age
From 25%	All other people living in the house aged over 21 years and over
15%	Household members aged 18-20 years of age, who are not the tenant, spouse or live-in partner
15%	Family Tax Benefit A and B
25%	Energy Supplement
100%	Maximum CRA entitlement for all household members
Nil	Person living in the household aged less than 18 years who are not the tenant, the tenant's spouse or live-in partner.

If you would like more information, please look at our Rental Subsidy Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

If you get a Centrelink benefit such as Newstart or DSP, you can get CRA. Link Wentworth will work out the amount of CRA you are entitled to during reviews of your rental subsidy.

It is important that you claim your CRA entitlement from Centrelink. Link Wentworth, in accordance with the Community Housing Rent Policy, charges you rent based upon 100% CRA entitlement.

How to pay your rent

You are required to pay your rent two weeks in advance in accordance with your lease. Link Wentworth provides a range of payment options for tenants to pay their rent.

Link Wentworth will give you a Tenant Reference Number (TRN) at the beginning of your tenancy. Any payments that you make towards rent, bond, water usage or any other tenancy related payment, must include this number so we can allocate your funds to your account.

Link Wentworth updated its payment methods in November 2018. You can pay rent in the following ways:

Payment Method	Requirements
Centrepay	<p>Centrepay is a voluntary bill-paying service which is free for Centrelink customers. Use Centrepay to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment.</p> <p>You can start or change a deduction at any time. The quickest way to do it is through your Centrelink account online.</p> <p>If you currently receive a Centrelink payment, you can pay your rent directly from your Centrelink benefits. You will need to fill out a Centrepay form which will be completed when signing your lease.</p>
Rent Card (in person)	If you want to use a Rent Card, you can request this from Link Wentworth. The Rent Card allows you to make your payments at more than 3,200 Post Offices in Australia using Post Billpay.
Rent Card (phone and online)	<p>You can make payments 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone or online. By phone, call 13 18 16.</p> <p>Online, visit https://www.postbillpay.com.au/</p>
Direct debit	Ask Link Wentworth to give you the deposit details then go to your bank and ask them to set up a direct deposit for each fortnight's rent payment.

Your Tenancy

Changes in household circumstances

If people move in or out of your home, this will change the amount of income for your household. If this happens, you need to let staff from Link Wentworth know within 28 days.

Change in circumstance	What you must provide to Link Wentworth
A household member stops working	Please provide a separation certificate or letter from your employer and confirmation of your new income (e.g. Centrelink income statement).
A household member begins working	Please provide pay slips.
There is a new approved household member	Please provide proof of their income, such as wage slips or a Centrelink income statement.
A household member leaves	Please let us know in writing.
A household member's work hours change	Wage slips confirming new hours.
If a Centrelink benefit changes (e.g. when a child turns 16 and you no longer receive family tax and/or a parenting payment)	Please provide an income statement from Centrelink to show new entitlements.
A child turning 18	Please provide proof of their income such as payslips or an income statement from Centrelink.

If you get behind in your rent or water payments

Link Wentworth uses the term 'rent arrears' when you get behind in your rent payments and 'non-rent arrears' for unpaid water usage charges or other tenant-related costs.

Getting behind in your rent or water payments can put you at risk of losing your tenancy so it is important to try and pay your rent on time and not get behind.

If you get behind in your rent or water payments, make sure you phone your Housing Manager who will organise a repayment plan for you.

If there is an increase in your household income and you don't let Link Wentworth know within 28 days, you will get behind in your rent.

Link Wentworth will also contact you if it appears that you are behind with your payments.

What to do?

It is important that you pay your rent and any other charges such as water on time.

We will phone you or send you a text as soon as we notice that you are behind in a rent or water payment. Please reply as soon as you can so that your Housing Manager can:

- Talk to you about your rent or non-rent arrears
- Organise a repayment plan and agreement
- Refer you to a professional financial counselling service if you think it would be helpful

You can read more about this if you look at Managing Rent and Other Arrears Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Water charges

In addition to your rent you may need to pay Link Wentworth weekly water rates for the water you use.

If you live in a separately metered property you pay for the actual water you use.



Social Housing Management Transfer tenants

Public housing tenants who transferred to Link Housing in December 2018 will pay either a 'percentage water charge' or an 'actual water charge'. This is determined by whether your property has a shared or a separate water meter. For tenants on shared water meters, the weekly water charge is based on a percentage of your weekly rent, less Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). It is capped at \$8.95 per week.

If you live in a separately metered property you pay for the actual water you use.

All transferring tenants are required to pay their water usage in advance just like your rent payments. You will find your weekly water rate on your Tenant Welcome Letter. If you are unsure what your water rate is, please contact our Client Services Team on **9412 5111**.

Your water is reviewed and recalculated regularly. If there are any changes to your water charge, Link Wentworth will send you a letter with the details.

All other Link Wentworth tenants

If you live in a separately metered property you pay for the actual water you use and are billed four times a year.

If you live in a shared metered property, you pay based on the total number of people in your household.

Link Wentworth calculates your water payment every quarter. You have 21 days to pay for water usage. Where tenants do not have separate water meters they will be charged according to the Water Charging Policy.

Please refer to the Water Charging Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

How to read your rent statement

Level 10, 67 Albert Avenue, Chatswood NSW 2067
 Level 2, 3-5 Anthony Road West Ryde NSW 2114
 Phone: 02 9412 5111
 ABN: 62 003 084 928

Rent Statement of Account as at 29-Jan-2019

Your Mailing Address
Is here

Your Tenant Ref. No.

Tenancy Ref ID: 20572

Current rent balance

Rent Balance: \$66.82

Non Rent Balance: -\$660.00

This shows how much you owe or are in advance for non-rent payments. If there is a minus sign it means you are ahead in your payments.

Rented Address: Address you pay rent for

Weekly Rebated Rent Payable: \$173.96 ← How much rent you must pay
 Weekly Market Rent: \$493.50 ← How much the market rent is

Paid to Date:(as at 29-Jan-2019): 31-Jan-19
 Rent in Advance:(as at 29-Jan-2019): -\$57.44 ← This shows if you are ahead or behind in your rent

The amount of rent you must pay The amount you paid The amount in your rent account

Date	Transaction Details	Charges	Payments	Balance
28/01/2019	Rent Charge 28/01/2019 - 03/02/2019	\$173.96		\$66.82
22/01/2019	Centrepay Payment		\$347.92	-\$107.14
21/01/2019	Rent Charge 21/01/2019 - 27/01/2019	\$173.96		\$240.78
14/01/2019	Rent Charge 14/01/2019 - 20/01/2019	\$172.44		\$66.82
08/01/2019	Centrepay Payment		\$337.80	-\$105.62
07/01/2019	Rent Charge 07/01/2019 - 13/01/2019	\$172.44		\$232.18
31/12/2018	Rent Charge 31/12/2018 - 06/01/2019	\$172.44		\$59.74
24/12/2018	Rent Charge 24/12/2018 - 30/12/2018	\$172.44		-\$112.70
21/12/2018	Centrepay Payment		\$337.80	-\$285.14
17/12/2018	Rent Charge 17/12/2018 - 23/12/2018	\$172.44		\$52.66
11/12/2018	Centrepay Payment		\$337.80	-\$119.78
10/12/2018	Rent Charge 10/12/2018 - 16/12/2018	\$172.44		\$218.02
03/12/2018	Rent Charge 03/12/2018 - 09/12/2018	\$172.44		\$45.58
27/11/2018	Centrepay Payment		\$337.80	-\$126.86
26/11/2018	Rent Charge 26/11/2018 - 02/12/2018	\$172.44		\$210.94
19/11/2018	Rent Charge 19/11/2018 - 25/11/2018	\$172.44		\$38.50

Your Tenancy Obligations

Going away?

If you are planning to be away from your home for more than six weeks, you need to contact your Housing Manager. We ask that you provide us with an emergency contact that we can get in touch with in case of an emergency while you are away.

Link Wentworth will generally approve an absence from the property for up to three consecutive months, if it is satisfied that:

- The tenant has made arrangements to pay their tenancy charges, such as rent and water usage, while they are away.
- The property is securely locked and will be adequately cared for while the tenant is away.

Please refer to the **Absence from Property Policy** on our website: <https://www.linkwentworthhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.



Transfers

Occasionally Link Wentworth may need to transfer a tenant. The reasons for transfer fall into the following categories.

- Link Wentworth may allocate a property to a client group such as people over 55 and the tenant/s in the household do not belong to this client group.
- Link Wentworth does not own the property and the lease with the private landlord has ended.
- The property has modifications not suited for people with a disability, or which the current tenant no longer needs.
- Link Wentworth intends to carry out substantial upgrading work on the property and the property needs to be vacant for this to occur.
- Link Wentworth intends to sell, demolish or develop a property or a group of properties, to provide more or different housing.
- To manage neighbour disputes or social disharmony that involves or affects the household.

- The property or its location is unsuitable for the tenant and they are unable to sustain a Link Wentworth tenancy.
- Link Wentworth will consider a management transfer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants to have a spare bedroom.

If a management transfer is needed your Housing Manager will discuss the reasons and process in detail before any move.

Please refer to the Management Transfer Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Your Tenancy Obligations

Tenant requested transfers

Link Wentworth social housing tenants can apply for a transfer. If you want to apply for a transfer, you must fill in a Transfer Application Form and give reasons why you want a transfer.

If your transfer is agreed to you will go on to the NSW transfer waiting list, which is managed the same way as the general housing waiting list.

If your transfer is not agreed to we will let you know and if you want to appeal against that decision, we will give you information on how to make an appeal.

As a general rule, transfer requests are not agreed to if:

- You have been in your home less than a year
- You have transferred two or more times in the last five years (excluding Link Management Transfers)
- You are in rental arrears or have an outstanding non-rent debt
- You are currently in breach of your tenancy agreement
- There are concerns about your ability to manage or sustain a tenancy
- You have not provided sufficient evidence to show that you need a transfer

You can find out more in the Tenant Initiated Transfers Policy on our website: <https://linkhousing/doc/policies/>.

Ending your tenancy

A tenancy with Link Wentworth can be ended by you or by Link Wentworth, for a variety of reasons.

Regardless of the reason Link Wentworth will ensure:

- All termination notices comply with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 or in the case of SDA properties, the Accommodation Agreement
- Tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities when ending a tenancy
- Tenants are given enough time to find somewhere else to live and move their things from their home.
- Tenants have the chance to be at the final property inspection

Tenants wishing to end a tenancy

Tenants who want to end their tenancy and hand back their property must give:

- 3 weeks notice (21 days) to if they are on a continuing lease
- 2 weeks notice (14 days) notice at the end of a fixed term
- 13 weeks notice (90 days) for a resident of an SDA property

Notices must be given in writing. In cases where you are unable to give 3 weeks notice due to being offered a permanent public housing property or due to exceptional circumstance, you may be able to negotiate this with your Housing Manager. Once your notice has been received your Housing Manager will contact you to discuss the procedure and requirements for vacating your property.

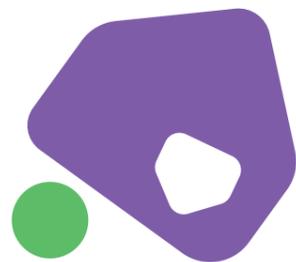
At this time we may also discuss with you any issues such as:

- Repayment of any rent in advance and bond (if you have paid a bond)
- Any debts that you haven't paid
- Disconnection of services
- Any repairs and cleaning that need to be done
- Removal of any goods/items/rubbish from premises
- Access to premises for showings

Personal emergencies

There are times when emergencies occur in your life that will affect your tenancy, for example, entering hospital or death of a household member.

When these occur if you or someone on your behalf could please advise Link Wentworth, we will be able to provide you with advice regarding your property and your tenancy.



Affordable Housing



Affordable Housing

Affordable housing gives people on low to moderate incomes the chance to rent a home in a range of locations which they may not otherwise be able to afford. These homes range in types and sizes, for different needs and different size households. Affordable housing is generally 20 to 25 percent less than market rent and people who apply must meet a range of eligibility criteria, which includes an annual assessment of maximum income.

Eligibility for affordable housing

To be eligible for affordable housing your household income must be within the maximum limits determined by the government. Other criteria include your rental history and your Australian citizenship or permanent residency status. Income limits are reviewed annually by the government and information can be obtained at: <http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/centre+for+affordable+housing/>

To remain in affordable housing you will need to provide Link Wentworth with your income documents each year.

Rent calculations in affordable housing

Rents for affordable housing are always lower than what you would pay for a property in the private market. Different methods are used for calculating the rent of affordable housing properties depending on how the property was funded. This is determined by one of two ways:

1. The first is a discount of the market rent – the rent is reduced by 20-25% less than a privately rented property.

2. The second is to set the rent at a proportion of a household's gross (before tax) income. Where rent is set this way, households may be charged rent between 25-30% of their before-tax income.

Link Wentworth reviews your rent annually prior to commencing a new lease.

Your Home Obligations

Your rights and responsibilities

As a Link Wentworth tenant, you are required:

- To keep your home in a reasonable state of cleanliness
- To notify Link Wentworth of any damage to the premises
- To cause no damage either by you or your visitors/ family/friends that is intentional or a result of your negligence
- To return the property at the end of your lease in a similar condition to when you received it
- Keep areas affected by mould well ventilated.

When cleaning your home you might want to keep in mind:

- Walls
- Carpet
- Tiles
- Floorboards
- Windows
- Screens
- Ceilings
- Blinds
- Curtains
- Light fittings
- Fans
- All components of the kitchen and bathroom

Link Wentworth will take fair wear and tear into consideration. We will:

- Provide the property to you in a reasonable state of cleanliness
- Provide and maintain the property in a reasonable state of repair taking into consideration the age and condition of your home.

Lawns, gardens and gutters

Tenants living in a freestanding property such as a house, townhouse or villa, are responsible for the regular lawn mowing, garden maintenance and clearing of the gutters.

Modifications to the property

Home modifications can assist residents who are living with disability to remain living in their own home.

Link Wentworth supports affordable modifications to properties to improve living standards. Modifications need approval by a medical practitioner such as an Occupational Therapist (OT).

For more information please speak to your Housing Manager and refer to our Modifications to Properties Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Pets

You must ask Link Wentworth before you get a pet. Because many of Link Wentworth's properties are rented from the private rental market, many of our properties do not allow pets.

Please write to Link Wentworth and wait for approval before you get a pet. Please tell us:

- Type and breed of the pet you are considering
- The size of the pet
- Proof of registration (if applicable)
- Any licence requirements (if applicable)
- For supported housing, a written approval from the support provider
- Information on how you will care for the pet

Residents of Link Wentworth are not allowed to breed animals and the tenant must also sign a Pet Agreement outlining any special conditions before approval is granted by Link Wentworth.

If you are allowed a pet, it is important that the animal is well looked after, does not disturb the peace of your neighbours and that you always clean up after your pet. You may also be required to have your carpets steam cleaned if necessary.

You can find out more about our Pet Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Your Home Obligations

Access to the property

Link Wentworth will inspect your property at least once every year that you are a tenant. The Residential Tenancy Act 2010 says that inspection can be done four times a year.

We will also inspect the property:

- Whenever the tenancy is finished
- If there are emergency repairs that are needed to conduct inspections for electrical and fire safety
- If you ask us to visit

The inspections are to make sure that everything is in good working order, and that you are looking after your home as set out in your lease.

You can find out more about our policy on access on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.



Home Contents Insurance

We suggest that you take out a Home Contents Insurance Policy. This is to insure your personal belongings (clothes, books, and toys), furniture and furnishings (curtains, bed linen, pictures) against damage or loss due to water, fire or burglary.

Keys

You are responsible for your keys. It's a good idea to have a copy of your keys cut and leave them with a trusted friend or neighbour. If you lose your keys or if you lock yourself out of your home, you will need to organise and pay for a locksmith.

We have copies of keys for some properties, but not all of them. If we do have a copy of a key that you've lost, you'll be able to pick it up Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

Never attach your address to your house keys as someone could get into your house if you lose your keys.

Replacements for swipe cards and garage remotes that are lost or damaged will have to be paid for by the tenant.

Security

Link Wentworth wants residents to be safe in their homes. It's always a good idea to check who visitors are before you let them in.

If you are not sure who they are or you feel suspicious don't let them in and call the organisation that they claim to represent. Ask the person what organisation they come from and then call the organisation to check who the person is.

Fire safety

Fire safety is very important.

You can make your home safer and limit the risk of fire by taking some basic precautions:

- Don't leave pans unattended while cooking on the stove
- Take care when cooking with oil
- NEVER put water on fire which involves cooking oil
- Turn off power points when not using them
- Remember to turn heaters off at night
- Don't put anything too close to a heater
- Make sure that everyone is aware of all fire exits and that you have a family escape plan

Please phone 000 and leave your home if there is a serious fire threat.

Smoke alarms

To protect you from fires, all of Link Wentworth properties have smoke alarms.

Please do not damage or remove these from the ceiling. You should test your smoke alarm at least once per month by pressing the test button. You must report any faulty or broken smoke alarms. Fire and Rescue NSW recommends changing your batteries at the end of daylight savings every April.

The law requires Link Wentworth to make sure the fire alarms work. Link Wentworth arranges for all smoke alarms to be checked once every year. You will receive notice from us in the mail advising of the date and time that your smoke alarm is to be checked. It's very important that you let us know if you can't make that time so that we can make another time with you.

If we don't hear from you, we will send you another letter advising of a date and time that we will come to your home to check your smoke alarm. If you are not there at this time and have not requested a different date and time that suits you, we may access your home without you being there. The reason for this is that we need to make sure that your smoke alarm works.

For more information, please call 9412 5111.

Contact 1800 151 164 or your nearest local Fire Station for assistance.

Electrical safety

Using electricity is something we take for granted, but using it safely is very important. Most electrical accidents and fires can be prevented by taking simple safety precautions.

- Keep liquids away from electrical items such as TVs, video game consoles, and computers. Liquids could spill and cause dangerous shocks or fires.
- Never play with electrical cords, light sockets, or electrical outlets. Report all broken switches, plugs and light fittings to Link Wentworth. Never try to repair it.
- Do not overload outlets with too many plugs and switch off appliances when not in use.
- Never yank on the cord to unplug an appliance. Turn the power point off and hold on to the plug itself.
- Keep sockets safe from children by fitting socket covers.
- Clean the lint filter of your drier after every use.
- Do not use an electrical appliance near water.

Pay TV, satellite dishes, antennas

You must not install a satellite dish or antenna without first getting written permission from Link Wentworth.

Communal or shared areas

It is one of the conditions of your tenancy that you and other people living in your property keep the shared areas clean and free from obstruction. The shared areas include:

- The entrance hall
- Stairways and landings
- Shared front garden or yard
- Bin area
- Parking spaces, paths and driveway

Rubbish

You should always place any rubbish you have in the bins provided by the council. Please do not leave rubbish in the shared areas. If you have large items that you want to throw away, you can contact your local council.

Most councils have collections for large items at least once per year. They may also pick up large items if you call them. Link Wentworth can help you by putting you in contact with one of our contractors if you are having difficulty organising rubbish removal. This will be at your own expense.

Garbage bins

You are responsible for putting out the bins and once emptied bringing them back in. If you have any questions or problems about this please contact your Housing Manager.

Parking

Car-parking spaces in shared areas of properties are for the benefit of all residents. Unless your tenancy agreement says that you do have your own car parking spot you do not have the right to an individual car parking space. You can contact your local council for information on residents' parking permits for street parking. Please note you must not park on shared driveways or in visitor parking spaces.

Pests

To help prevent pests in your home such as cockroaches, silverfish and mice make sure that:

- You keep all food wrapped up where possible, preferably in an airtight container.
- You keep bench tops, cupboards and floors clean and free of food items.
- You do not bring soft furnishings that you find on the street into your home as this can cause bed bugs.

If you have pests, please consider trying a shop bought product before contacting the office.



Your Home Obligations

Repairs

All Link Wentworth tenants who need repairs can call Link Wentworth on 9412 5111 or fill in the online form on our website: https://www.linkhousing.org.au/contact-us/#request_a_repair_form

Link Wentworth aims to respond to your repair needs as quickly as possible.

You can also email maintenance@linkhousing.org.au with the following information:

- Your name, property address and phone number
- A detailed description of the problem
- Whether you have reported the problem before
- When a tradesperson can get access into your property to assess and fix the problem.



Urgent repairs

An urgent repair includes any of the following maintenance problems:

- Burst water service
- Blocked or broken toilet system
- Serious roof leak
- Dangerous electrical fault
- Failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the premises
- Failure or breakdown of any essential service on the premises e.g. hot water, cooking and heating
- Fault or damage that cause the premises to be unsafe or not secure.

In the event of any of the above events, it might be necessary for Link Wentworth to access your property, without notice, to limit any damage.

However, for emergencies involving:

- Gas leak
- Flooding or serious flood damage
- Serious storm or fire damage

Contact emergency services by phoning 000

When Link Wentworth is responsible for undertaking repairs the aim is to respond within:

Urgent repairs	24 hours
Non-urgent repairs	5 working days
Routine maintenance	28 days or deferred to the regular maintenance program

Your Community

Tenant participation and how to get involved?

Tenant participation is about tenants getting involved in their housing and communities. It's about tenants taking part in the decision making process, planning of programs, and making suggestions for improvements to how Link Wentworth operates and much more.

Link Wentworth needs your help and advice in order to help us achieve our goals and make the right choices for you as our customer. There are several ways to get involved with Link Wentworth.

Regional meetings and block meetings

Link Wentworth invites all tenants to attend meetings in their area. These meetings give you the chance to share ideas, meet other tenants and discuss issues that are important to you.

The Tenant Advisory Group, Regional Tenant Groups and block meetings are a really good way to make sure that we meet our tenants' needs and make them feel included.

What are the benefits?

- Providing feedback on Link Wentworth's services and policies and seeing the results of your input
- Developing meeting skills
- Getting experience in chairing a meeting
- Increasing your understanding of Link Wentworth and other community housing providers.
- Making new friends with other tenants
- Having the chance to represent other tenants and be their 'voice.'
- Getting to know Link Wentworth staff and Board members

Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)

The TAG has up to 20 tenants and it meets four or five times a year at the Link Wentworth Chatswood Office. Tenants can volunteer to be on the TAG, by completing a form and sending it in to Link Wentworth. This form can be found on the Link Wentworth website:

<https://www.linkhousing.org.au/tag-member-application-form/>

The TAG is a forum for tenants to raise issues, discuss options, plan actions and advocate for support to improve the quality of life for themselves, their neighbours and the broader community.

What would I be doing?

Members of the TAG enjoy being involved in a wide range of services and activities including:

- Participating in meetings and events
- Discussing tenancy issues such as repairs and maintenance
- Providing feedback on Link Wentworth's policies which have an impact on tenants
- Advising on how Link Wentworth communicates with tenants
- Assisting with planning community programs including competitions, special events, forums and the Link Wentworth Scholarship Program
- Providing advice on how tenants can participate e.g. surveys or workshops

How much time would I have to give?

As a member of the TAG, you can be involved as little or as much as you would like. However, you are required to attend some regular meetings.

Privacy and confidentiality

Privacy and Confidentiality

Link Wentworth takes your privacy seriously.

Link Wentworth protects your privacy and stores personal and sensitive information safely.

We may need to ask you questions to identify you before we give out information.

Collection of information

Link Wentworth may also contact you from time to time to promote a service or event. We collect information which is necessary to provide these services.

You can choose not to receive information on events or programs if you wish. Just call us on **9412 5111** or email enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au.

If you have any concerns about your privacy or the collection of your personal information, you can contact Link Wentworth's Privacy Officer on **9412 5111** or by emailing privacy@linkwentworth.org.au.

Feedback

We value your compliments and suggestions as it provides us with an opportunity to improve our service to you. You can provide feedback in the following ways:

Fill in the online form on our website: https://www.linkhousing.org.au/contact-us/#feedback_complaints.

Call us on 9412 5111 and speak to our Client Services Team or your Housing Manager

Drop into our Chatswood or West Ryde office

Write to us at PO Box 5124, Chatswood West NSW 2067

Email us at feedback@linkwentworth.org.au

Take part in our postal, phone and online surveys

Access to information

You can ask to look at your own personal information that Link Wentworth keeps in its records. You need to ask in writing to look at it.

Link Wentworth will generally agree to your request unless:

- It could pose a serious threat to life or health of any individual
- The identity of the person making the request has not been checked
- If the law prevents it
- The request is frivolous or vexatious
- The privacy of others may be affected

You can have a look at our Privacy Policy on our website. This will tell you what information we collect and how it is used: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/privacy/#menu/>.



Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

Formal complaints

At Link Wentworth our goal is to provide an excellent service but if things do not go as well as we planned you can give us feedback. Your feedback helps us make our services better for everyone.

If there is a problem, a mistake or something that we have failed to do let us know. Complaints can be made anonymously.

Examples of complaints are:

- Change or withdrawal of service
- You can't contact a staff member or your call is not returned
- Repairs are not done within the timeframe we told you they would be done
- We did not follow our policies and procedures

We want you to let us know if there is a problem so that we can improve our service. Please follow these simple steps:

STEP 1: Contact our Client Services Team and tell them your complaint. They will talk to your Housing Manager if they can sort out your concern

STEP 2: If you are unhappy with the response from the Team, you can contact Link Wentworth by phone, text, email (feedback@linkwentworth.org.au), letter, or in person

Link Wentworth will let you know that we have received your complaint within 2 working days. The time frame for dealing with a complaint will depend on what the complaint is about but mostly we deal with complaints in 15 working days unless the person reviewing the case is unable to speak to the parties involved.

You can have an advocate or support person to help you, but you must give written permission if you want us to speak to them directly. Link Wentworth can also provide an interpreter if you want one.

You can find out more about our Feedback and Complaints Policy on our website: <https://www.linkwentworth.org.au/doc/policies/>.

Appeals

If you are not happy with a decision that Link Wentworth makes you can make an appeal against the decision.

You normally need to make an appeal within 3 months of when the decision was made. You can have a longer time to make an appeal if for example, you did not know that a decision had been made about something that affects you or if you were in hospital.

When you make an appeal we will let you know we've received it within 2 working days. The time it take to respond to an appeal will depend on what you are appealing about but we try to respond within 15 working days unless the staff reviewing the appeal can't make contact with the parties involved.

Examples of decisions that can be appealed include:

- Eligibility for housing
- Taking you off the waiting list
- The type and size of home you have been allocated
- Allocation priority
- Eligibility for transfer (re-housing)
- Removal from transfer list
- Suitability of offer
- Level of rental subsidy
- Permission to undertake modifications or alterations
- Permission to keep a pet

You can find out more about our Appeals Policy on our website: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/doc/policies/>.



Our Offices

Our offices are located in Chatswood, West Ryde, Penrith, Windsor, Katoomba and Lithgow. Details of your local offices are below.

Chatswood Office

Level 10 67 Albert Avenue, Chatswood, NSW 2067

(02) 9412 5111

West Ryde Office

Level 2, 3-5 Anthony Road, West Ryde, NSW 2114

(02) 9412 5111

Penrith Office

Suite 1002, Level 1 29-57 Station St, Penrith, NSW 2750

(02) 4777 8000

Hawkesbury Office

409A George Street, South Windsor NSW 2756

(02) 4777 8000

Blue Mountains Office

Level 2, 98 Bathurst Road, Katoomba NSW 2780

(02) 4777 8000

Lithgow Office

42 Main Street, Lithgow NSW 2790

(02) 4777 8000

How to contact us

T 9412 5111

F 9412 2779

Post PO Box 5124, Chatswood West NSW 2067

Website linkwentworth.org.au

Email enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au

Feedback feedback@linkwentworth.org.au

Twitter @LinkWentworth

Facebook LinkWentworthHousing

Do you need an interpreter, or are you hearing impaired?

If you would like assistance to speak with us, you can ring the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131 450. While you are on hold, the TIS will ring the Link Wentworth office and they will interpret for you. This service is free of charge.

TTY (for hearing impaired): 133 677
National Relay Service Helpdesk (hearing impaired) 1800 555 660

Important Contacts

Emergency (police, fire, ambulance) 000

Centrelink		Link2home - Homeless Persons Info	1800 152 152
MyGov helpdesk	132 307	NSW Rape Crisis Centre	1800 424 017
Multicultural Information line	131 202	Lifeline Counselling	131 114
Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS)	131 450	Family & Community Services	132 111
		Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
		Action for people with Disability	9449 5355
Sydney Water		Tenancy information services	
Customer enquiries	132 092	Fair Trading NSW	133 220
Service difficulties/emergency service	132 090	Tenancy Advisory Service – Northern Sydney	8198 8650
SES - Storm and flood	132 500	Rental Bond Services	133 220
		NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal	1300 006 228
Family and community services		Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service	1800 251 101
Northern Sydney – Chatswood	9406 9777	Community Justice Centre	1800 990 777
Pennant Hills	9875 0800	Aboriginal Housing Contact Centre	1800 727 555
		NSATS	8198 8650
Community services		Housing NSW	1300 468 746
Domestic Violence Crisis Line (24 hrs)	1800 737 732		
	1800RESPECT		

Charity organisations and stores

The Salvation Army		Local Councils	
Care Line	1300 363 622	Bayside Council	1300 581 299
Brookvale	9907 2124	Blacktown City Council	9839 6000
Chatswood	9412 1019	Burwood Council	9911 9911
Manly	9977 1304	Camden Council	4654 7777
Mona Vale	9999 5735	Campbelltown City Council	4645 4000
Hornsby	9477 1133	Canterbury Bankstown Council	9707 9000
Ryde	9887 1147	City of Canada Bay Council	9911 6555
		City of Parramatta Council	1300 617 058
St Vincent de Paul		City of Ryde Council	9952 8222
Willoughby	9412 1052	City of Sydney Council	9265 9333
Chatswood	9419 4236	Cumberland Council	8757 9000
Neutral Bay	9953 9519	Hornsby Shire Council	9847 6666
North Sydney	9955 3997		
Gordon	9418 4712		
Hornsby	9477 5022		
		Hunter's Hill Council	9879 9400
		Inner West Council	9392 5000
		Ku-ring-gai Council	9424 0000
		Lane Cove Council	9911 3555
		Liverpool City Council	1300 36 2170
		Mosman Council	9978 4000
		North Sydney Council	9936 8100
		Northern Beaches Council	1300 434 434
		The Hills Shire Council	9843 0555
		Waverley Council	9083 8000
		Willoughby City Council	9777 1000
		Wollongong City Council	4227 7111

Link Wentworth Ltd

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T 02 9412 5111 **F** 02 9412 2779

E enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au **W** linkwentworth.org.au